

## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the former Eagle's Nest Land Acquisition

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*The former Eagle's Nest is located at 3251, 3263-3265 and 3279 Nicolet Drive, Green Bay, WI.*

**Q: Why is the county looking at acquiring this property?**

**A:** For a variety of reasons...

On July 18, 2018, a County Board Supervisor submitted the following Communication to the Education and Recreation Committee: *"Have the Parks Department look into purchasing the old Eagle's Nest to add a much needed Safe Harbor and Boat Launch."*

The 2017 Brown County Parks and Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies specific goals and objectives for acquiring new park property to meet future needs, and pursuing funding opportunities from state and federal programs

Also, this is following the recommendations of other county studies and plans, a number of local municipal comprehensive plans, and the statewide plan that all identify the need for increased public access to area water resources.

**Q: I'm not a boater, why is an additional boat launch important to our community?**

**A:** The bay of Green Bay provides 66 square miles of water within Brown County borders, and as of December 2, 2019 there are 21,661 boats registered by Brown County residents. Currently, three (3) developed boat launch sites exist, with only one improved launch directly on the bay (Bay Shore). These launches are not meeting current user demand. Severe storm trends are on the rise as indicated in the Inventory and Analysis of Brown County Marinas, Launches and Harbors for Watercraft Safe Refuge document. The bay is an arm of Lake Michigan and weather conditions can change rapidly, leaving boaters to have to quickly decide how to get to safe harbor when weather conditions suddenly threaten their safety. Strategically placed boat launches around a body of water are more beneficial than one large developed launch. Law enforcement agencies have also expressed support for this project for safety reasons. Furthermore, public water access contributes to our Outdoor Heritage by allowing everyone access to additional shore fishing opportunities, non-motorized watercraft access, viewing sunsets and improving quality of life which contribute to the economic vitality of our community.

**Q: Why this specific location?**

**A:** This site is located approximately mid-point between the Bay Shore landing and Metro landing, with a total shoreline distance of approximately 16 miles. Historically, the site has been operated commercially as a bar, supper club, wedding/event banquet facility, boat rental facility and mooring facility. The main parcel is zoned commercial and a public park/launch facility fits within current zoning restrictions and is similar to the site's historic use as a marina. In addition, the west shore is primarily emergent wetlands with shallow water depth and little if any future opportunity exists for additional developed launches. The east shore is developed and bluffs of

the Niagara Escarpment limit future access. This site may be the last available site for a developed access point for the community.

**Q: The immediate area has experienced flooding. Why would the county spend money on this project versus residential flooding?**

**A:** The grants sought for purchase of the Eagle's Nest property are specific for outdoor recreation and not related to flooding. These are two completely unrelated issues with different funding mechanisms. However, should the Eagle's Nest site be owned by the county, development there could assist with managing storm water drainage. As highlighted by Brown County Public Works Director Paul Fontecchio, this can be achieved through green infrastructure while capturing water from the immediate area and filtering pollutants before that water runs into the bay. (See the blue lines on the map, especially A15)



**Q: What is the status of this project?**

**A:** The County has tentatively been awarded a WI DNR grant for 50% of the appraised property value, which has been approved by the state's Natural Resource Board. This grant will now require a passive review approval from the state's Joint Committee on Finance. A second grant has been submitted to the US Fish & Wildlife Services for approximately 50% of the remaining appraised value, this has been awarded to the County.

**Q: How will future development be funded?**

**A:** Grants, alternative funding sources and boat landing fees would be sought for future development. At this time, Brown County does not own the land so we are unable to apply for many grants without a deed to the property. In the future, we will prepare estimated high-low development costs. The final design plan process will include opportunities for neighborhood and community involvement. Final cost estimates will be determined following the design process.

**Q: How would on-going maintenance of the new site be funded?**

**A:** Brown County has an established Ordinance 8.12 entitled, "COUNTY BOAT RAMPS", requiring all water craft used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on the water to pay the set rates as approved by the Brown County Board of Supervisors. A segregated fund, managed by the Parks Department, has allowed on-going maintenance to be funded solely through user fees and matching grants, if necessary. This fund is only utilized for boat landing maintenance, operation and capital expenditures. Adding an additional launch will not negatively impact maintenance on current launches, and it is possible the annual launch pass fee would increase.

**Q: How much traffic do boat launches draw?**

**A:** It is difficult to determine the exact amount of traffic. Boat launches are utilized primarily on summer weekends when the weather is calm. We see limited days where boating conditions are ideal during these months. If we assume a capacity of 80 vehicle/trailer parking stalls, and turnover rates are twice a day, maximum daily vehicle/trailer traffic would equal 160 units over a 12-hour day. This assumption provides traffic data at the upper limit of routine use and does not occur on a daily basis. Additionally, on inclement weather days or seasonally when boat launches are not used as much the property will still be available as a waterfront viewing location and vehicular trailer traffic will be limited.

**Q: What is the status of the Bay Shore launch and Harbor Design plan?**

**A:** A combination of a strong storm surge, with high lake levels in the lower bay caused water levels to rise on or around Nov. 30, 2019. The damage was concentrated to the north edge of the parking lot (~ 20-30 feet) and a mooring pier gangway. The asphalt will be repaired in the spring.

The Harbor Design plan is on hold until the Eagle's Nest site is finalized. The Harbor Design plans range from \$605,000 for breakwater and parking lot improvements, up to \$10,726,000 for lakebed grant securement for parking and launch expansion.

Grant dollars for the Eagle's Nest site are specific for that site and may not be reallocated by Brown County for use on Bay Shore County Park repairs or improvements, these are two separate projects.

**Q: What is the economic impact of the bay versus property tax loss?**

**A:** The Economic and Fiscal Impact of Green Bay Recreational Fishing study, released in 2019, shows there is \$263.8 million in annual economic benefit from recreational fishing, generates \$14.8 million in annual state and local taxes and supports 2,711 full-time jobs for the local communities. The economic impact is not known for hunting, recreational boating and other non-motorized uses, but these activities likely generate additional significant economic benefit to the local economy. The current property taxes are \$47,059.

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